A

SERMON

Preach'd at WHITE-HALL

Before the

QUEEN,

March the Sixteenth, 1691.

BY

EDWARD PELLING, D. D. Chaplain in Ordinary to Their Majesties, and Rector of *Petworth* in *Sussex*.

Publish'd by Her Majesty's Special Command.

LONDON,

Printed for *W. Crooke*, at the *Green-Dragon* without *Temple-Bar*, MDCXCII.

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Coloss. I. 12.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light.

IT may be otherwise rendred thus, and more agreeably to the Original; *Who hath fitted us for a ſhare of the inheritance of the Saints in Light*: Which St. *Chryſoſtom* doth reckon to be a very Signal Act of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God; that he doth not only tender us the Felicities of Heaven; but moreover, qualifies and fits us for the Enjoyment of them. This, ſaith he, is a double favour, to offer, and to fit us too. Honour is loſt, when 'tis thrown away upon an improper and unfit Perſon. And hence St. *Chryſoſtom* argues, That though God's preparing a Kingdom for us, be a great expreſſion of his free Grace and Goodneſs, not merited in the leaſt by any Performances of ours, yet

yet the preparing of us for that Kingdom, the fitting of us to enter into it; this is the main Thing, the greateſt Work and Bleſſing of all: And for that Reaſon it is, that St. *Paul* doth here give God ſuch hearty Thanks for his unſpeakable Goodneſs and Mercy, in making us meet (or fit) *to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light.*

In Diſcourſing upon which Words, I ſhall,

I. Firſt ſhew, That, in order to the Enjoyment of the Felicities of another World, it is neceſſary for us to be fitted and qualified for them in this.

II. Wherein that Fitneſs doth Conſiſt, or what thoſe things are, which directly ſerve to fit us.

III. And then, in the Laſt Place, I ſhall draw down this Speculation to our Practice.

1. That

1. That in order to the Enjoyment of the Felicities of another World, it is highly neceſſary for us to be fitted for them in this; to be made meet, and apt, and rightly qualifi'd for the Enjoyment of them. My meaning is, that though we uſe the Means of Grace and Salvation, as the hearing of God's Word, Prayer, the Receiving of the Holy Sacrament, and the like; though we believe all the Doctrines of our Religion; and though we be fully ſatisfied of the Truth of God, and comfort our ſelves with confident Expectations of God's Goodneſs and Mercy; yet, beſides and beyond all this, there is required ſuch a Temper of Mind, ſuch a Diſpoſition and Frame of Soul, as is ſuitable to that Bleſſed State, which is the Portion *of the Saints in Light.*

The Reaſon of this is drawn from the Common Notion of Happineſs. For after all the nice Diſputes which have been about it, Happineſs muſt be a State of Delight and

and Pleaſure, reſulting from the Congruity between the Object and the Deſire. Whatever it be that is prepared to make one Happy, though it be never ſo good, he cannot find true Happineſs in it, if it be diſagreeable to his Mind, or ſhort of his Deſires; ſo that he cannot enjoy it with Complacency and Delight; becauſe in ſuch a Caſe, ones Soul would be unſatisfied and uneaſie, which is utterly inconſiſtent with a State of Happineſs, eſpecially ſuch a Perfect State of Happineſs, as the *Saints in Light* enjoy. Heaven it ſelf could not be a Place of Pleaſure to ſuch Souls, as cannot love or reliſh ſo Divine Entertainments, nor care to be acquainted with them. For by Heaven is underſtood, not only a Glorious Place, where the Spirits of Juſt Men live, without any Senſe of Miſery and Pain; but moreover a Perfect State, wherein all thoſe things are fully prepared, which the Powers and Faculties of every Holy Soul do reach after here, with a greedy and reſtleſs Appetite, as the only proper Object for a Reaſonable Soul to be employ'd about. It includes

includes a Perfection of Knowledge; whereby the Mind doth with tranſcendent Pleaſure perceive, whatever the Underſtanding is capable of perceiving; and a Perfection of Enjoyment, whereby the Will is, with tranſcendent ſatisfaction, gratified with whatever it is capable of Deſiring. To render therefore this Pleaſure and Satisfaction, and conſequently this Happineſs, Perfect, there muſt of neceſſity be a Correſpondence and Suitableneſs, between the Powers of the Soul, and the Things of Heaven: The Faculties muſt be of ſuch a Diſpoſition and Temper, as anſwers and agrees with the Nature of the Things. Forced Enjoyments can never be delightful; to be ſure not ſo perfectly delightful, as Enjoyments that we deſire.

Hence it follows, That it is of infinite Concernment to us, while we live in this World, ſo to mould our Tempers, and ſo to transform our Minds, that our whole Soul may be of a Complexion and Frame, agreeable to that Heavenly State, which is *the inheritance of*

the Saints in Light. 'Tis as much as our Souls are worth, to do it, and to do it now; because there is nothing between this World and another, but Death; and that can never alter a Man's whole State so, as to make him fit for that, which he was not fit for before: Death does only give the Soul a Passage into another World; it doth not change its Inclinations and Habits. Those are things which we are here a long while Contracting, and consequently must require a long time to change and alter them. An Habit of Vertue is not infused into the Soul in an Instant, but is acquired by degrees, by a constant Repetition of Vertuous Acts; nor is this to be done, but by the Assistance and Co-operation of God's Spirit, sowing in our Nature a seminal Principle of a New Life, and both Preventing and Furthering us in all our Works. Now this great Work can be done but once, and this Life is the only time for it. For when Death comes, there is an End of the H. Spirit's Operations, and the Spirit of a Man is past all mending. There can be no Repentance in the Grave, nor any right Repen-

Repentance in Hell it ſelf. Though there muſt needs be Sorrow where there is ſuch Torment, yet it is a Sorrow not for Sin, but for the Rewards of it; no Godly Sorrow that reneweth the Heart: The Soul is ſtill diſpoſed, as before, like a Wild Creature that retains its Nature, though it be ſhut up within a Grate. Heaven, indeed, is a Place where a Soul is perfected; but yet it is, not by changing its Habits and Qualities, but by crowning them with Glory. A Life of Vertue and Holineſs, is conſummated and made unchangeable, but not begun there. In ſhort, it is impoſſible to conceive how that habitual Bent and Biaſs, which is in the Heart of every wicked Man, can be totally and finally rectified, meerly by the paſſing of his Soul out of one World into another, and that too againſt its Will and Deſires. Such a Soul therefore could not be happy among *the Saints in Light*, were it admitted into that Society; becauſe a Carnal Mind is ſo far from reliſhing thoſe Divine Pleaſures, *which are at God's right hand*, that it is at Enmity againſt them, and againſt God himſelf.

This I take to be one great Reaſon, why God hath given us ſo many Laws of Vertue, that thereby he may make us Veſſels fit for Glory; fit for that Happineſs, which, of his infinite Goodneſs, he hath provided for all his poor Creatures, which are capable of receiving it; and, which he deſires to Communicate to us all, not willing that any ſhould periſh. Though the Practice of Vertue be Reaſonable and Excellent in it ſelf; and though it brings with it ſuch Peace, and Comfort, and Satisfaction here, as is preferrable to all the Glories under the Sun; yet the uſefulneſs of it another Day, and in another Place, is the main Thing conſiderable. God, who dwells himſelf in Heaven, knows what we are to do, and how we are to live there, and which are the beſt means to prepare and fit us for an Heavenly State. Though the Reaſons of every Particular Vertue may not at preſent be ſo obvious to our view, yet God ſees them; He knows whither every Vertue ultimately tendeth; and how it ſerves

to

to Subdue, to Regulate, to Purifie our Minds; to Raiſe our Affections; to Refine our Natures, and to Cultivate our Souls; ſo that every Particular Grace and Vertue now, may ſpring up into a Life of perfect Glory and Happineſs hereafter.

From which Premiſes, theſe Four things muſt follow.

1. Firſt, That we may not in any wiſe build our Hopes of Eternal Happineſs, upon any Decree of God, without due Preparations of our own. For God's Decrees ſuppoſe us to be rightly prepared: And as it is God's Purpoſe, that without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee him; ſo the very Nature of the Thing, requires all poſſible Sanctifications of Heart and Body, to fit us for the Beatifical Viſion.

2. Nor may we depend upon Faith, without other Acts of Obedience to the Divine Laws; becauſe that Faith muſt needs be Imperfect and Ineffectual, which doth

doth not ſerve to Purifie us, *as God is pure.*

3. Nor may we lay any ſtreſs upon Repentance it ſelf, without ſuch Fruits as are meet for it. For where there is not ſuch a Renovation of Heart, as is Productive of Reformation of Life, there is no Repentance unto Salvation, let the Grief and Remorſe of Mind be never ſo great.

4. Much leſs may we truſt to any outward Severities and Mortifications of the Fleſh, without the Sanctification of Heart and Spirit. Though this Solemn Paſchal Faſt be of very Ancient Inſtitution, and was obſerved in the Primitive Times, to great Purpoſes of Religion, and is of great uſe ſtill, where People are careful to anſwer the Ends of it; yet no Bodily Exerciſes profit any thing, in compariſon of Subſtantial Holineſs. Faſting is a Relative Duty, intended for the mortifying of our ſinful Luſts and Affections. It is not alone, and of it ſelf any Preparative to Happineſs; nor are thoſe

thoſe outward Penances to be valued at all, which the Folly and Superſtition of later Ages have grafted upon it.

In ſhort; Conſidering how the Holy Scripture inculcates the neceſſity of a new Heart, a new Spirit, a new Creature, and the like; the only Buſineſs we have to do *in this our day*, is, to form in our Souls ſuch Divine and Noble Diſpoſitions, as may *make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of God's Saints*, and render a Life in Heaven perfectly agreeable to our own Hearts deſire.

2. What thoſe Diſpoſitions are, which are neceſſary to Fit and Prepare us for an Heavenly State, is the next thing to be Conſidered. And for the right underſtanding thereof, it is requiſite to enquire a little into the Life of the Bleſſed above, becauſe that is the proper Idea and Pattern, according to which we are to form thoſe Diſpoſitions I ſpeak of.

Not that we can pretend to have Perfect Conceptions of the other World. It is a thing

thing we know but little of, becauſe God hath not been pleaſed particularly, to Reveal the Condition and State of it; and therefore we muſt not preſume to pry too narrowly into that Holy of Holies, or think to diſcover now all thoſe things which are yet within the Veil. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,* 1 Cor. 2. 9. Yet ſo much God hath Revealed to us by his Spirit, that we have reaſon to believe theſe Five following things:

1. That the Life of the Bleſſed Saints, is a Life of perfect Love and Peace. Though we cannot now diſtinctly conceive, how Spirits Converſe with one another, and Communicate their Thoughts and Affections to one another; becauſe the Notions we have here, come from Idea's preſented to our Senſes, and our Senſes are not fine enough for Spiritual Repreſentations; yet it is certain, that entire Harmony, is a great Part of the Heavenly State. God himſelf, the Center of Happineſs, is Love. And as he Diſplays and

and Communicates his Love over the whole Intellectual World; ſo the Affections of that infinite Hoſt of Bleſſed Spirits to him are Reciprocal, becauſe it is in him that they are happy. And becauſe they are all like him, and all love him, and all derive their Felicities from him, their mutual Love to each other muſt needs be inviolable and univerſal; ſo that Angels and Saints make up but one Society, all united together in the ſame Mind, in the ſame Joys, and in the ſame common Love of God. Hence the Apoſtle tells us, that *Charity never faileth*, 1 Cor. 13. 8. and ſo he ſets it above *Faith* and *Hope*; not only becauſe it is of greater Uſe, and ſingularly Communicative and Beneficial in this World, but chiefly becauſe it hath this peculiar Prerogative, that it is of endleſs Duration in the next. *Whether there be Prophecies, they ſhall fail; whether there be Tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; whether there be Knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away; but Charity ſhall never fail*; it will be the everlaſting Exerciſe of the *Saints in Light*; their proper and peculiar Employment. Thoſe Wars and Fightings, which are among us now, pro-

ceed from our Luſts: That Envying and Striſe which rageth in this World, is Earthly, Senſual, Deviliſh; thoſe Hatreds, and Animoſities, and Diviſions, which attend our preſent Warfare, are Effects and Arguments of Carnality. When that which is Imperfect ſhall be done away, a Perfect State of Love, and Unity, and Concord, will be at once the Portion and the Happineſs of the Triumphant.

2. The Life of *the Saints in Light*, is a Life of Devotion. By Devotion, I mean, the offering up of the Soul to God, from a lively ſenſe of the glorious Excellencies of his Nature, and of his boundleſs Goodneſs to his Creatures. Whether the Saints departed do offer up any Prayers unto God, is a thing uncertain. Though ſome Proteſtants are inclined to think, as a probable Matter, that out of a Principle of Charity, they pray in general for the Church Militant; yet that they pray for particular Perſons, or in particular Caſes; or that they pray as Mediators; or that they are to be prayed to themſelves; all this

this we utterly deny. But it is a Truth unqueſtionable, that they Adore the God of Heaven, in ſuch a way as is ſuitable to a State of Bliſs and Perfection: Admiring the Glories of his Nature, extolling His Majeſty, Praiſing him continually, and never reſting from giving him Thanks, for the Infinite Riches of his Grace and Goodneſs. This appears from many Paſſages in St. *John*'s Revelation, where the Four Beaſts are ſaid, not to reſt Day or Night, ſaying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*; and the Four and twenty Elders are ſaid to fall down before him that ſat on the Throne, and to Worſhip him that *liveth for ever and ever*; and with Harps and Golden Vials full of Odours, to *Sing a new Song unto the Lamb*: And the Angels themſelves, with the Beaſts and Elders, are ſaid, to Worſhip God, ſaying, *Amen*: *Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdom, and Thankſgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God*; and the like. For though this was a Viſionary Repreſentation, not a ſet Hiſtory of the particular State of Heaven; yet the Analogy it bears to it, plainly ſhews, that the Spirits

of Juſt Men made Perfect, do, with the Bleſſed Angels, make up one Heavenly Chorus, to Adore the Infinite Majeſty of God; and to chant out Praiſes and Hallelujahs unto him to Everlaſting Ages.

3. And hence it follows, Thirdly, That the Life of *the Saints in Light*, is a Life of the moſt Divine Contemplation alſo. For this is the Ground of that Adoration and Worſhip which is paid to the Creator of all things; and ſo St. *John*, ſpeaking of the Day of Appearance, tells us, That *then we ſhall ſee God as he is*, 1 Jo. 3. 2. *For now we ſee through a glaſs, darkly, but then, face to face*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Chr.* 13. 12. and again, *Then ſhall I know, even as alſo I am known.* By which ſeveral Expreſſions it is evident, that though the Saints of God have very imperfect Conceptions and Glimpſes of him in this Mortal Life, and though it is impoſſible for them, being Finite Creatures, to have an Adæquate and Comprehenſive Knowledge of him in any State whatſoever; yet when the Glory of God ſhall be Revealed in them, they

they ſhall clearly and cloſely perceive every thing that is knowable of God; with the moſt raviſhing ſatisfaction, ſhall Contemplate the Beauties and Glories of his Eſſence; and as fully, as 'tis poſſible, underſtand his Perfections, together with the aſtoniſhing Reaſons of his Decrees and Operations. Whatever Notions our Souls have of God in this Life, we are fain to gather by looking into the Glaſs of his Creation, and of his Word, as the Means of ſeeing what we are able to diſcover: And that Imperfect Viſion we have, is but a Reflex Viſion, by the help of weak Conſideration and Diſcourſe. And hence it is, that our Apprehenſions are ſo childiſh in Compariſon; we Argue like Children; Speak like Children, and Underſtand like Children, whoſe Conceptions are rather Dreams and Fancies, than the Reſults of Solid and Man-like Reaſon. But when that which is imperfect is done away, the Soul is bleſt with a direct and immediate view of God; with a clear Underſtanding of the Excellencies of his Nature, how Wiſe and Juſt, and Good and Powerful God is, and how wonder-

wonderfully Righteous and Gracious in all his Works.

4. From this clear and intimate Knowledge which the *Saints in Light* enjoy, it follows yet further, that their Life there is a Life of Purity; becauſe St. *Paul* tells us, that *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. and our Saviour's Promiſe of ſeeing God, particularly belongs to ſuch as are *Pure in heart*, Math. 5. 8. We come into this World unclean from the very Womb; and as we grow up, we contract a great deal more Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, by medling too much with the World; and by ſuffering our fooliſh Appetites to run out after the Corruptions of it. To Cleanſe and Sanctifie our Souls, and ſo to fit them for a Life of Bliſs and Perfection with himſelf, is the great Work of God here. And this he does by the Miniſtry of his Holy Word; by the uſe of Holy Sacraments; by the inward Motions and Operations of his Holy Spirit, and by that variety of Holy Laws which he hath laid before us. And hence it

is,

is, that there are ſo many Vertues propoſed to our Practice, proper and peculiar to this Mortal State, wherein we are ſurrounded with Miſery and Temptation; as, Moderation, Temperance, Meekneſs, Self-denyal, Patience, Fortitude, Juſtice, Submiſſion, and the like. For though theſe Vertues are highly conſonant to Human Reaſon; yet the great Advantage they bring in order to a future Life, is the moſt conſiderable Excellency of them; for all theſe ſerve in their ſeveral kinds, and in a great meaſure; ſome to ſubdue and tame our wild Spirits, and to prepare them for a Life of everlaſting Peace; others to mortifie us, and make us weary of our Luſts; others to curb and bridle our Paſſions; others to defend us from Temptations; others to wean our Affections off from the World; all of them to Spiritualize our Natures, to ſcour us from our Droſs and Tin; and in one reſpect or other, ſo to purge the Soul, that when it goes out of the World, being ſprinkled with the Blood of Chriſt, it appears Pure and without Blemiſh in that Heavenly Sanctuary, whither nothing that

that is Unclean can come. This is that Holineſs and Purity of Heart, which prepares the Saints for the ſeeing of God. And as this Pure State fits them for the Beatifical Viſion; ſo doth the Beatifical Viſion fix and confirm them in that State, and renders it unchangeable. The Reaſon is, becauſe all manner of Perfection which the Heart of Man can deſire, being in God, and in God only, every Soul, that is with him, muſt needs be ſatisfied to the full; and the Underſtanding and Affections muſt of neceſſity be ſo employed and fixt upon him, that the Will cannot poſſibly be averted from Enjoyments, ſo infinitely Perfect and Satisfactory. The very Nature and Condition of that Bleſſed State, cannot permit any Souls to wander, in the leaſt, from an Infinite Good; and therefore they muſt Everlaſtingly continue Pure and Spotleſs; like the Holy Lamb of God, whoſe Will was perfectly Conformable to the Will of his Father; *Who knew no Sin, neither was any Guile to be found in his Mouth.*

5. Beſides

5. Beſides theſe Poſitive Felicities, which *the Saints in Light* enjoy, I think there is but one particular Thing more which is Revealed to us, of their Life in Heaven, and that is, That they bear a Reſemblance and Similitude of God himſelf. Thus St. *John* tells us, 1 Jo. 3. 2. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear* (that is, it doth not yet diſtinctly and fully appear) *what we ſhall be: but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Some render the Words, *when it ſhall appear*, (meaning when our future State ſhall come) *we ſhall be like God*; and indeed it ſeems to be the more natural Reading: We ſhall be like God in all manner of Glory, according to the Capacities of Finite Beings; and ſaving the Difference that ever muſt be between God and Creatures. We ſhall be like him in a Divine and Immortal Life; this Frail Animal Life being quitted, and changed into a Spiritual one, and Corruption being ſwallowed up of Incorruption. But the greateſt Happineſs will

be, that we ſhall be like him in the Divine Perfections and Excellencies of his Mind; without any Error in the Underſtanding; without any obliquity in the Will; without any Diſorder in the Affections; there will be a perfect Rectitude in our Nature, Reſembling in all poſſible Degrees, thoſe Perfections which are in the ever Bleſſed God, who is abſolutely Righteous, Holy, and Good.

Now by what is thus Revealed to us, concerning the State of *the Saints in Light*, we may eaſily perceive what Diſpoſitions of Soul are neceſſary to be in us, to fit and prepare us for a Bleſſed Portion with them, *viz.* The ſame Divine and Heavenly Diſpoſitions, which the *Saints in Light* have, ſuch Qualities and Habits of Mind we muſt have here; ſuch an Heavenly Converſation we muſt begin here; ſuch a Frame and Temper of Heart we muſt carry with us to the Grave; becauſe, as our Inclinations and Affections are, when we go out of this World, ſo they will be for ever.

I obſerved before, That ſome Vertues are peculiar to our preſent Circumſtances, to this Weak, Mortal and Militant Condition: Even thoſe Vertues we muſt be careful to grow and proceed in now, becauſe they help, every one of them in its kind, and in ſome meaſure, to prepare us for a better State. But becauſe the Life of *the Saints in Light*, doth immediately conſiſt in the exerciſe and vigorous Activity of ſuch Diſpoſitions, as are proper to a Glorious and Perfect State; therefore our great Study and Buſineſs in this World ſhould be, to enrich and adorn our Souls with thoſe Diſpoſitions chiefly, and to make them habitual to us, by the familiar and delightful Practice of them now; that we may be in Heaven, as in our proper Element; that the Society of Saints and Angels may be to our Hearts Deſires; and that the Condition of the other World may be ſuch as we would be in; ſuch as we may be in Love with; ſuch as we may enjoy with the higheſt Pleaſure and Satisfaction. Were we caught up, with St. *Paul*, into the

Third Heaven; or could we climb up ot the top of ſome ſolitary Mountain, there to pull out of our Sides, all thoſe Briars and Thorns, which *Adam* left us; and throw our Griefs and Troubles away all at once, and ſo take our flight into thoſe Happy Regions above: Good God! What an Orderly, Quiet and Harmonious World, ſhould we find there? What a Family of Love? What a Conſort of Devout Spirits? What an Angelical Hoſt, with Ecſtaſies and Raptures, beholding the Face of God? What a Glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but Holy and without Blemiſh; every Soul there reſembling the Holy one of *Iſrael*, in Bliſs and Sanctity?

3. Therefore, that we may *be meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light*, we muſt, above all things, accuſtom our ſelves to the delightful Practice of thoſe Heavenly Graces, which are to be our Life in that day: To fill our Hearts with an entire Love of God and Man; to have fervent and perfect Charity among our ſelves: to lay

lay aſide all Malice and Bitterneſs of Mind: to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace: to put on, as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy and Kindneſs: to love the Habitation of God's Houſe, and the Place where his Honour dwelleth here below; to Pray without ceaſing, and to be continually in the Temple, Praiſing and Bleſſing God in a great Congregation: To have God always in our Thoughts, increaſing daily in the Knowledge of him, and being filled with it in all Wiſdom and Spiritual Underſtanding: To cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit; and for the Perfecting of Holineſs in the Fear of God, to be like him, as much as 'tis poſſible, even in this World; to be, as he is, and, by beholding, as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the Lord, to be changed into the ſame Image, from Glory to Glory, from one Degree of it to another.

So much as we have of theſe Vertues and Perfections now, ſo much we have of Heaven in our Poſſeſſion already. This we ſhould mind therefore, as the only thing we are

are to mind, as long as we breathe; becauſe our Eternal Fortunes depend upon ſuch a Diſpoſition and Temper, as I ſpeak of now. It doth not only Inſure our Title to the *Saints Inheritance*, but it likewiſe renders our Entrance into it very Eaſie, and as it were Natural unto us. And this is the higheſt Advantage we get by the ſincere Practice and Love of Religion. Though it is a ſecurity to us againſt all the Dangers of this Life, and againſt all our Enemies round about us, becauſe it Intitles us to God's Particular Providence and Protection: Though it always brings with it ſuch Comfort and Peace of Mind, as is a kind of Heaven to us in the greateſt Diſtreſs; and though it fortifies us againſt the Approach of Death, which is ſo unwelcom to Nature, and ſo terrible to Fleſh and Blood; yet our delighting in the Ways of Vertue and Piety, brings us an Advantage beyond all theſe: It prepares us for a Bleſſed Life to that Degree, that after Death we ſhall be fit for no other State, but the Society of Saints, and the Enjoyment of God. And herein lies the extream

extream Folly of Lewd and Profligate Wretches, that while others are laying up in ſtore ſuch excellent Securities againſt the Time to come, that they may attain Eternal Life; theſe are Treaſuring up all the Wrath and Vengeance they can, and prepare that Hell for themſelves, which God Originally prepared only for the Devil and his Angels. Whither can we ſuppoſe Atheiſtical Spirits fit to go, but to that dreadful Place, where they will be forced to Believe, as the Devils do, with Trembling and Deſperation? Or, whither can Men of Black Deſigns, of Turbulent Spirits, of Miſchievous Diſpoſitions, and Malicious Minds; Whither, think ye, can they be fit to go, but to their Confederates in Iniquity, thoſe Spirits of Darkneſs, which are a Plague and Torment to themſelves, as well as to the World? Heaven can be no Place for ſuch Deviliſh Natures: Neither will God's Decree, nor can the Nature of the Thing it ſelf allow it. It is impoſſible for the Saints of God, and the Sons of *Belial*, to be Joint-Heirs with Chriſt:

Christ: There would be another War in Heaven; because there is such an utter Antipathy in the Minds of Wicked Men to the Life of the Blessed.

As therefore it is high Presumption in those of the *Romish* Faith, to trust to the Merits and Intercession of Saints, and to I know not how many Superstitious and Trifling Performances of their own, for their future Happiness; so it would be great Vanity in us, to depend either upon the Purity of that Religion we profess, or upon the Power, Mercy, and Will of God himself, without those inward Dispositions and Habits of Mind, which are necessary *to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light.* For, though we are saved by Grace; though all that we can do or be, cannot, by any intrinsick Dignity and Excellence in the Thing, deserve so great a Recompense of Reward, as is reserved for us; yet the Entire and Practical love of those things, which are Honest, Just, Pure, Lovely, and of Good Report, is the fixt

fixt and neceſſary Condition, without the performance whereof, we cannot be truly Happy; 'tis that which muſt prepare us for the Eternal Poſſeſſion of our Inheritance; that which muſt diſpoſe and fit us for the Divine Mercy; that which muſt render us capable of ſeeing and reliſhing the Great Goodneſs of God in the Land of the Living.

To Conclude, It is natural to ask, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* An Enquiry which we ſhould often conſider of, and not lay it aſide, as we are apt to do, till we are poſſeſt with the Pains and Frights of a Death-Bed. Now, this is the right and certain Way, ſo to mind the Things which concern our Everlaſting Peace, and are Preparatives to it, that the Practice of them may be Familiar and Delightful to us: To addict our ſelves to the Love and Exerciſe of all manner of Vertues; and to riſe every Day to higher and higher Degrees in the Exerciſe of it. All this is neceſſary, to diſpoſe and fit us for Perfect Happineſs. This is to taſte of

Heaven, and to reliſh the Pleaſures of it before hand; which we never can be ſatisfied with, except they be ſuitable and pleaſing to our Appetites now. Thoſe ſenſual and groſs Delights, which Carnal Men hunt and reach after ſo greedily, would be nothing at all to them, were they not agreeable to their Bodily Senſes. And this is the Reaſon of that difference, between the Pleaſures of a Brute Beaſt, and thoſe which are proper to Man; becauſe the Organs of Senſation are of a different Contexture. And this is the Reaſon too, of the difference between the Delights of an ordinary Man, and thoſe which a Philoſopher enjoys; becauſe there is ſuch a vaſt difference between Fleſh and Spirit; the Senſe is for one thing, the Mind and Reaſon is for another. And thus a Saint differs too from a common Philoſopher; the one minds Nature, and ſeeks no further nor higher than this World; the other pants after Heaven, and nothing can ſatisfie or anſwer his Deſires, but thoſe Divine Pleaſures *which are at the right hand of God.* Thus, *to be ſpiritually minded, is life and peace,* as St.

St. *Paul* discourseth, *Rom.* 8. 6. It is the ready way to it, the true Preparation for it; the Pledge and Earnest of it indeed; and, as it were, the Livery and Seisin of *the inheritance of the Saints in Light; Which I beseech God to give unto us all, for Christ Jesus his sake; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, Glory and Thanksgiving, World without End.* Amen.

FINIS.